

May 2007

A report from the Montgomery Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama

PRCA MONTGOMERY

CHAPTER NEWS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We're barely past the midway mark of PRCA's fiscal year, but it already feels like the year is winding down. Board members are beginning to think about their year-end duties, including putting together "The Book" that will serve not only as a historical record of our year, but also as PRCA-Montgomery's entry for Chapter of the Year. While the end of the year is not until Sept. 30, "The Book" and other award entries are due around July (the official deadline has not yet been announced). You'll be receiving more information about the process for selecting our chapter's nominee for the "Professional Achievement Award" soon, as well as the criteria for earning the designation of Senior Practitioner. I encourage each of you to thoughtfully consider who in our chapter has excelled both professionally and as a chapter member.

In addition to awards and recognitions, year-end activities include a push for new members in the final quarter when the "grandfathering" clause takes effect and rounding up volunteers to serve on the upcoming year's Board of Directors. With "grandfathering," new members joining May 1 or later are exempt from paying the October 2007 dues, so they essentially get up to four months of membership for free! So, if you have any friends, co-workers or business associates that you think might benefit from PRCA, now is the time to invite them to a meeting and to encourage them to join this great organization.

Finally, now is the time for making plans to attend the State Conference in Mobile, Sept. 16-18. A short article is included in this newsletter with details about the conference. For more information and to register, visit www.prcanline.com/Conference/conference/index.htm.

Stacy

"Innovative Ideas" from the Biscuits Topic of May Meeting

Join us in May when our special guest speaker will be Marla Terranova, marketing director for the Montgomery Biscuits. In May 2003, Marla moved to Montgomery from Michigan and became the first employee of the Montgomery Biscuits. Both Marla and the Biscuits marketing department have been recognized regionally and nationally for their successful promotion of the Class AA team.

Marla will share with us some of the creative strategies that have made the Biscuits a household name in the River Region. Don't miss the chance to hear about innovative ideas that may help you better promote your organization. Join us Monday, May 7, at 11:45 a.m. at the RSA Plaza!

CHAPTER MEETING

Innovative Ideas to Promote Your Organization

Monday, May 7, 2007

Guest speaker:

Marla Terranova

Marketing Director for the Montgomery Biscuits

RSA Plaza

11:45 a.m.

Members: \$12

Non-members: \$20

RSVP to Diane Christy:

dchristy@ascpa.org

RSVP Deadline:

Noon on Friday, May 4, 2007

Annual PRCA Conference

The annual PRCA Conference will be a joint conference this year with SPRF. The conference is planned for Sept. 16-18, at the historic Battle House Hotel, a Renaissance Hotel in downtown Mobile. You can now reserve your rooms and register for the conference online.

Discounted room rates at the Battle House are \$125/night. Earlybird registration is \$250 for the full conference (which includes Monday and Tuesday conference activities, lunches, 50th Anniversary Celebration & Medallion Awards Event) if you register before August 24. Visit the state web site at www.prcaonline.com for further information.

Holcomb Appointed to PRCA-Montgomery Board

We're pleased to welcome Heather Holcomb as the newest member of the PRCA-Montgomery Board of Directors. The board recently voted to appoint Heather as Fundraising Chair, following the resignation of the previous chair.

Heather is a University of Southern Mississippi alumna with a master's in public relations. A native of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, she has been employed with The Salvation Army in various positions since 2001, including that of public information officer in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. She relocated to Montgomery in 2006 and joined PRCA that same year. Heather currently serves as director of PR and development for The Salvation Army.

As Fundraising Chair, Heather's main responsibility is organizing our annual workshop, which serves as the chapter's primary fundraiser. If you're interested in serving on the workshop committee or have any suggestions regarding possible speakers or sponsors, please contact Heather today at heather_holcomb@uss.salvationarmy.org.



Where will YOU be on Oct. 2-3, 2008?

At the 2008 PRCA State Conference in Montgomery, of course! Mark your calendars now, and make your plans to attend this annual event as it comes back to the Capital City. The event will be held at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center. Conference committee chairs Alicia Atcheson, Peggy Collins, Bill Cunningham, Anne Graham, Nancy Mitchell, Lori Moneyham, Jim Plott and Lori Quiller are beginning to put together the event details, including a theme that will be unveiled in September in Mobile.

Putting together a statewide conference is not an easy task, and we hope to make this conference bigger and better than any conference we've had before. But, to do that, we are certainly going to need some volunteers to help out. If you are interested in serving on any of our committees: sponsorships, registration, speakers, awards, banquet, finances, publicity, mechanics, etc., please e-mail Lori Quiller at lquiller@acca-online.org. We still have plenty of time before we have to roll up our sleeves and dig in, and we are hoping that some of you will want to dig in with us!

Mark your Calendar!

The annual PRCA-Montgomery workshop is tentatively scheduled for Friday, July 13. Please make plans now to attend this half-day workshop.



Ann Shoemaker, curriculum director for Character@Heart, at the April meeting.

Medallion and Lantern Awards Updates

This year, according to prcaonline.com, Medallion and Lantern awards will have an on-line entry system that will help streamline and clarify the process for entrants, organizers and judges. On-line entry sites for Medallions and Lanterns should be operational by late May, and the entry acceptance dates for both award programs are tentatively set for May 31 - July 15.

Entry categories and judging criteria have been streamlined and updated. Entries will be classified broadly into two divisions: PR Programs and PR Projects (tactical/materials). The committee is developing a PowerPoint presentation that will be sent electronically to all PRCA and SPRF members in May explaining how to enter online, categories and judging criteria.

If you haven't entered the Medallion or Lantern competition in recent years, please consider doing so this year because much has changed - including flat fees with reductions for multiple entries. Start thinking now about what you can enter. Entries for 2007 Medallions must have been produced between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2007. Eligibility dates for Lanterns are May 1, 2006, to April 30, 2007.

PRCA Member Profile

Rockie Johnston is the director of media relations and Kids Fest event coordinator for Jubilee CityFest. She is responsible for informing the public/media of all things Jubilee CityFest (web site, newsletters, etc.), development of activities and programs that will drive ticket sales as well as sponsorships and participation in strategic planning activities for future Jubilee events. She graduated from the University of Alabama with a degree in special education.



Do you have any tips to being a top PR practitioner?

Rockie: In the world of event planning and management it's all about flexibility - you have to be able to manage change as it relates to your own program, as well as assist your team and volunteers to handle change with grace. You also have to recognize that in event management the unexpected is the norm - so the ability to remain calm and command the situation is critical to producing a quality event.

What are the top three skills needed in PR?

Rockie: 1. The ability to quickly and succinctly communicate key messages; 2. Flexibility and the ability to adapt quickly to change; 3. Resourcefulness - understanding that great ideas don't always require a huge budget and the creativity to make good things happen on a shoestring budget.

From where did your interest in PR originate?

Rockie: It began with my marketing position at MacMillan Bloedel. Learning how to effectively convey the message of what great (and sometimes a little different) products we had was always a rewarding challenge.

Why did you join PRCA?

Rockie: PRCA members assisted me my first year as the media chair of Jubilee in the planning phase and during the festival. They were so helpful. I wanted to enhance my knowledge base by learning from them.

What experience most shaped your career?

Rockie: Times of crisis seem to be the greatest time for learning. You learn quickly that keeping your cool is a critical skill set. Your performance during times of crisis is what truly sets you apart as a PR professional.

What would you like to be doing in five years?

Rockie: I would like to continue my job at Jubilee CityFest and to expand my role in public relations, particularly in media relations. I would like to have more time to play tennis!

What was the greatest lesson you learned through PR?

Rockie: You have to be proactive in communicating the message you want to tell the public.

Time Approaching to Recognize a Montgomery Practitioner

The State PRCA Board recently voted to change the name of the Practitioner of the Year Award to the Professional Achievement Award in order to align with SPRF's naming convention and to more accurately reflect the significance of the award. You will soon be hearing from your local board about the local nomination process.

Of the chapter nominees, one will be chosen to represent our chapter as one of six nominees on the state level. The state winner will then go on to compete for SPRF's Professional Achievement Award. The board highly regards the input of the entire chapter, so please begin thinking of who you would like to nominate for Professional Achievement Award.

PRCA - Montgomery Award Winners & Senior Practitioner Designees

PRCA Grover Smith Lifetime Achievement Award Winner
Grover Smith (2003)

Philip R. Forrest Jr. Practitioners of the Year

Charles McKay (1976) Charles Barnette, APR (1987)
James Yeaman (1979) Rosemary Blackmon, APR (1993)
Holley Midgley, APR (1985) Julie DeBardelaben (2001)

SPRF Practitioner of the Year

Rosemary Blackmon, APR (1994)

Senior Practitioners

Holley Midgley, APR (1990)	Miinnie Lamberth (1999)
Tom Somerville (1990)	Suzanne Anderson, APR (2003)
Charles Barnette (1990)	Belinda Bazinet (2003)
J. Paul Till (1991)	Melanie Beasley (2005)
Les Hartwig (1994)	Hank Schmitt (2005)
Darryl Gates (1995)	Kay Yarbrough (2005)
Rosemary Blackmon (1996)	Lori Moneyham (2006)
William Cunningham (1998)	Ami Simpson (2006)
Julie Debardeleben (1998)	Lenore Vickrey (2006)
Linda Lee, APR (1998)	Phyllis Wesley (2006)

Do You Qualify for Senior Practitioner Status?

SPRF established the SPRF Senior Practitioners designation to honor SPRF members who are veteran public relations professionals with high ethical principles that are admired by their peers and who meet certain criteria.

To receive the designation, a recipient must qualify in three of the following four criteria:

- *15 years of full-time public relations experience
- * Accreditation by the Universal Accreditation Board
- * Officer or board member at chapter, state or SPRF level
- * Recognition of professionalism as evidenced by such awards as Lifetime Achievement Award, Lantern Award or similar honor

Be on the lookout for a survey to determine which members qualify for this prestigious status. (Members already designated as Senior Practitioners will not be surveyed.)